

**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEOGA HELD IN
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS MUNICIPAL BUILDING 533 CHESTNUT
APRIL 21, 2003, 7:00 P.M.**

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mayor Gary A. Mercer and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Those present were: Commissioners Modglin, Altman, Warner, Varner, and Mayor Mercer.

MINUTES

Commissioner Altman made the motion, seconded by Commissioner Modglin, to approve the regular and executive meeting minutes of April 7, 2003. Yeas, Commissioners Varner, Altman, Warner, Modglin, and Mayor Mercer. Nays, none. Motion carried. 5-0

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

REQUEST FROM FIRE DEPARTMENT

Bill Albin, on behalf of the Neoga Fire Department, requested that the Council consider allowing city employees who are Fire Department Volunteers to respond to fire call during the day time hours. Albin explained that the Fire Department is having difficulty getting enough firemen to respond during the day because so many of the volunteers work outside of the city. Albin said Fire Chief John Carruthers was the only one to respond for a recent house fire. He noted that luckily Ronda Russell and Alan Baker responded as EMT's and they are also Fire Department Volunteers and they helped fight the fire and Randy Mendenhall just happened to be in town and was able to respond. Otherwise Carruthers would have been completely on his own. Mayor Gary Mercer said that the Fire Department is an absolutely integral part of our community. Without those volunteers Neoga would be without fire protection. Council asked Superintendent Hagerstrom if he foresaw any difficulty with allowing city employees to respond. Hagerstrom said he has no problem with it unless there is a conflict with the water department. He said if they are doing water/sewer testing or there is a water main break they would not be able to respond because they would need to be making the water for the fire department to use to fight the fire. Also, it was the consensus that if an employee responds to the fire department and they are not needed they would return to work. Brief discussion was held on legal or workman compensation liability when city employees respond to the fire department to fight a fire.

Motion: Commissioner Altman made the motion, seconded by Commissioner Varner, to approve allowing the city employees to respond to the department when a fire call goes out pending approval by city Insurance company and City Attorney. Yeas, Commissioners Varner, Altman, Warner, Modglin, and Mayor Mercer. Nays, none. Motion carried. 5-0

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

APRIL 21, 2003

CONSIDERATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF WATER/SEWER PAYMENT BY CREDIT CARD

Discussion was held on the possibility of accepting credit card payment for water/sewer bills. The machine will be provided through First Mid Illinois Bank & Trust at the following cost.

1. \$400 for equipment
2. 2% of charged sale plus .16 cents per ticket.
3. \$10.00 monthly service charge.

After discussion it was the consensus of the Council for the City Clerks office to proceed with setting up the ability to accept payment by credit card.

ORDINANCE NO. 729-04-03 AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO
SELL PERSONAL PROPERTY.

Commissioner Modglin made the motion, seconded by Commissioner Warner, to approve Ordinance No. 729-04-03. Yeas, Commissioners Varner, Warner, Modglin, Altman, and Mayor Mercer. Nays, none. Motion carried. 5-0

FINANCE

BILLS

Commissioner Modglin made the motion, seconded by Commissioner Altman, to approve payment of the bills in the amount of \$112,987.07. Yeas, Commissioners Varner, Modglin, Warner, Altman, and Mayor Mercer. Nays, none. Motion carried. 5-0

TREASURER'S REPORT

The previous months statement of fund balances was given to all council members. After review of the statement, Mayor Mercer ordered that the statement of fund balances be placed in the files of the City Clerk.

IMRF PROPOSED RATE FOR 2004

Council briefly reviewed the Advance IMRF Contribution Rate Notice. It was noted that the present rate for the City's contribution is 5.25% the proposed rate for 2004 is 8.78%. This was for information only no action required.

CONSIDERATION OF EARLY PAY OFF OF CITY LOANS

Discussion was held on the possibility of paying off the balance early on two water project loans. One in the amount of \$25,187.20 and one for \$141,419.12. Commissioner Modglin noted that he would like to pay these loans off because return on city reserve money is low and interest on the notes is higher. City Clerk Ehrhart told the Council that because there are several obligations still to be met, that will require using the reserve funds, that payment of the larger note could cause some shortfalls. After discussion about some of those obligations and the need to meet the city's portion of the Sewer

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

PAGE -3-

APRIL 21, 2003

Design Engineering Grant the following motion was made. Motion: Commissioner Modglin made the motion, seconded by Commissioner Warner, to pay off the note for \$25,187.20. Yeas, Commissioners Varner, Warner, Altman, Modglin, and Mayor Mercer. Nays, none. Motion carried. 5-0

PUBLIC AFFAIRS CONTINUED

BUILDING INSPECTOR REPORT

Building Inspector Gary Kastl told the Council that the three houses discussed at the last meeting have been addressed in the following manner. One has been sold and repairs are being made, one has been posted for demolition if not brought up to code and a letter in regard to code violations has been sent to the owners of the third one. Additionally, Kastl told the Council that the Zoning Board had expressed their concern that the present Zoning Ordinance does not address portable car ports and they are looking to the City Council for direction. Mayor Mercer told Kastl that the Council would prefer to receive suggestion from the Zoning Board on how they envision this should be addressed. The City Clerks office will research how other communities address this issue in their Zoning Ordinances.

PUBLIC PROPERTY

SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC WORKS REPORT

Superintendent Hagerstrom reported on the following.

1. Rock has been spread in several alley's to build them back up.
2. During the last few months several trees have been cut down. Still have several stumps to remove at a cost of between \$75 to \$80 per stump.
3. Hagerstrom spoke to AmerenCIPS about trimming trees that wires are getting into.

Also,

he and a representative of Ameren went to the Lake Pump House and marked 16 trees that Ameren will remove and city employees will cut up and get rid off. He noted that

we

have been letting people take the firewood.

4. Got the digester cleaned up after the tractor was repaired.
5. The sewer jet machine is stuck in a sewer on 5th street. Hagerstrom said the sewer main in

this location is 15 to 16 foot deep. Additionally, water and gas mains are very close.

Also,

they found sink holes, put dye into them and it went straight into the sewer. Because

the

lines are so deep Hagerstrom is having Norm Penseneau with G.R.R. Construction

dig

down and repair this area. Hagerstrom noted that this will be a major expense. This

main

carries everything from the east side of the tracks. He noted that on the positive side

this

did enable us to find some of the infiltration problem.

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

PAGE -4-

APRIL 21, 2003

METHODIST CHURCH REQUEST TO PURCHASE PROPERTY

Jeff Morrison representing the Grace United Methodist Church told the Council that they are putting together preliminary plans for a new Church. As a part of this process they have acquired the property North of the Church and are trying to get the next property. Morrison said they were interested in acquiring the 60 ft. X 60 ft., piece of property owned by the City next to the coin metered sales and the old storage shed property. Mayor Mercer explained that the City is required to get an appraisal of the properties and sell them for not less than 80% of the appraised value. It was the consensus of the Council to proceed with the process of getting a Resolution prepared to authorize the sale of the properties, and to begin the appraisal process. It was noted that the Council would like to see the sale of this property benefit this many community members. Additionally, it will be required that the old storage shed is torn down as a part of the purchase.

SEWER GRANT DISCUSSION

Larry Johnson with Daily & Associates Engineers, Inc. discussed with the Council the receipt of the \$100,000 Sewer Design Engineering Grant received by the City. Johnson noted that the City's existing and former employees worked very hard to fill out this grant and they should be commended for their diligence and hard work on the project. Johnson reviewed the proposed project with the Council and noted that the actual construction will be next fall. Additionally, because of the late announcement of the grant recipients we are under a very short time line to get the Design Engineering done in time to apply for a construction grant in October. The City Clerk is to set up a Sewer Grant Committee meeting as soon as possible.

STREET'S AND ALLEY'S

MOTOR FUEL TAX STREET PROGRAM FOR 2003

Commissioner Warner told the Council that he and Tom Overmyer with Daily & Associates, Engineers will be setting up a meeting in the near future to discuss this years street work. Warner said that their intent is to stick with the 8 year street plan.

HEALTH & SAFETY

ITEMS OF DISCUSSION

(1)After discussion on the possibility of spraying mosquitos by air it was the consensus of the Council to have the public works city employees take care of mosquito spraying since they are all fully licensed to spray. (2) Dates for the city wide clean up were set for June 7th and June 14th. (3) Brief discussion was held on the need to find someone to fill the ESDA Coordinator position.

Next Council meeting date was changed to Thursday the 8th.

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

PAGE -5-

APRIL 21, 2003

RECESS INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION

Commissioner Altman made the motion, seconded by Commissioner Varner, to move into executive session to discuss Section 2 (c)(1) the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the public body. Yeas, Commissioners Warner, Varner, Modglin, Altman, and Mayor Mercer. Nays, none. Motion carried. 5-0

RECONVENED AND ROLL CALL

This meeting reconvened on motion by Commissioner Altman, seconded by Commissioner Modglin. Those present for roll call were: Commissioners Varner, Warner, Altman, Modglin, and Mayor Mercer.

REQUEST FOR WATER/SEWER MAIN EXTENSION

Commissioner Warner reported that Steve Maroon had approached him about the possibility of him building a home out in the field north of the subdivision he now lives in. Maroon asked about the having water and sewer main extended to him if he followed through with building in that location. It was explained that the cost of a main extension must be recoverable by revenues that would be obtained from use of the main. In this situation only one person would benefit and the cost would be prohibitive. No action taken on this matter, for information only.

ADJOURN

Commissioner Modglin made the motion, seconded by Commissioner Altman, to adjourn the regular meeting of April 21, 2003, at 9:20 p.m. Motion carried via voice vote.

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Gary A. Mercer, Mayor

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Patricia D. Ehrhart, MMC, City Clerk